

TO: GENERAL JOHN K. SINGLAUB  
FROM: ED DEARBORN  
COPY: MIKE TIMPANI  
SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR A CIVILIAN ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE  
SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR THE FDN AIR OPERATIONS  
PROGRAM

The following proposal is a rough draft of our intentions to form a company that would supply complete support of the FDN Air Operations Program.

The support of the FDN Air Operations is vitally needed and would provide continuity for our overall objectives. At present the air arm of the FDN is completely fractionalized and has no clear cut goals or objectives. They need a strong leadership program, with adequate training and personnel to insure the objectives we set in this conflict are met with the least expenditure of life and machines.

As we presently stand, we are an ill-equipped, poorly trained group of people with little or no motivation to get the job done. As Co. Gomez has stated so many times, "These are the lepers of the Nicaraguan Air Force". Most of the pilots were cadets when the war started and never finished their training.

It is my intention to form a civilian company, bringing on board, the best operations people available, who are capable of providing quality instructional programs, in both maintenance and pilot training, with courses on intelligence briefings and conducting of covert and overt air resupply programs.

An aviation technical services company could provide the following services to the FDN Air Operations Program;

A. FIXED WING AND ROTARY WING MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

At present the maintenance program for all types of aircraft is very limited. It will be our job to provide competent maintenance personnel and instructors, who will not only service the aircraft, but provide a program of instruction to insure that the people we now have are qualified mechanics and are capable of running a competent maintenance program. Additionally, we will search out good quality maintenance people to augment the staff we now have. These could be third country nationals.

B TRAINING OF PILOTS FOR BOTH FIXED WING AND ROTARY WING

The present group of pilots for the FDN is lacking completely in the proper training for the mission they are trying to accomplish. One of the basic problems is the experience level of the aviators now involved with FDN Air Operations. We need to find and train a more mature, experienced group of aviators; keeping in mind that few, if any, of the current group of Nicaraguans available have had any combat experience.

As we progress in our operations "in country", we will have to specialize our pilot group; i.e., helicopter pilots, stol pilots, and transport resupply pilots, with the possibility at some future date of employing coin/cas pilots. All of this would only be available through a good training program.

C. PROCUREMENT OF SPARES AND OVERHAUL OF UNSERVICEABLE PARTS

One of the problems that we face now is the acquisition of spare parts at a good price, plus overhaul of unserviceable items. We will set up a computer program for spares and overhaul of unserviceable items which would help keep costs down and inventory at the right levels. This program alone can be very costly in terms of aircraft available for service. Nothing can be more serious than the cancellation of a mission due to unserviceable aircraft.

D. SPECIFIC AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS AND TRAINING USING TCN CREWS

The problem now is acquiring good Nicaraguan aviators. It has been suggested that third country nationals may be available and eager to work. We could formulate a plan to use these people primarily in local resupply drops, non-sensitive missions and in training programs. This to be discussed in detail at some later date, but keeping in mind it would give us greater latitude in conducting our operations.

E. TRAINING OF PERSONNEL ON SAR, FAC INFIL/EXFIL, INTELLIGENCE GATHERING, BRIEFING AND DEBRIEFS

It is our intention to set up a good intelligence briefing program to better enable the pilots to perform the mission assigned them. This is a critical point in our air operations program. I am sure the pilots will have more confidence in their ability to complete assigned tasks if they have adequate briefings on enemy activity in their sector of operations. This is just straight basic intelligence gathered through debriefings, after action reports and the daily field reports relayed to operations. This will allow us to start building a situation map, pinpointing activity and areas to avoid.

Additionally, we will build an SAR program to insure that our pilot group has the best possible chance of being picked up in an emergency and they are forced down "in country" or anywhere for that matter. This too will be a great confidence builder. Along with all this will be courses taught in forward air control work, pus infil and exfil operations.

At present the people who have agreed to come aboard and get this company off the ground cover all aspects of the program we would like to implement. Here is a brief rundown on the personnel:

MIKE TIMPANI: Former Army helicopter pilot, Delta Force, Grenada invasion, specialist in NVG/flying with helicopters.

Presently involved with Falcon Wings in Mesa, Az. as their Special Projects Manager. Extensive and good contacts in Central America; presently putting together a helicopter maintenance program in that area.

JAMIE HILL: President of Southwest Florida Aviation A specialist in the rebuilding of Bell UHIB helicopters. Mr. Hill's company is an FAA certified helicopter repair station and is qualified to do any and all type of maintenance and repair on helicopters. Mr. Hill did two tours in Vietnam on helicopters and took his discharge there to continue a business interest that he developed after marrying his wife in Vietnam.

ED ROGERS: Director of Cargo Sales and Vice President of Marketing for Mary Air in Anchorage, Alaska. Associated with Mary Air since 1969, Mr. Rogers has a good background in logistics, having run Mary Air's program on the Alaska pipeline. A former pilot, he has been in commercial aviation since 1954, and is presently in charge of providing C-130 transportation for the FDN out of New Orleans.

DON CONEY: Currently a Captain for PSA Airlines, he was the Director of Operations at PSA for four years. Mr. Coney spent many years in Southeast Asia with both Air America and Continental Air Services. He also assisted me in the Congo operation for the "company" in 1963/64. A former Marine pilot, he has extensive knowledge of close air support, air drop techniques and infil/exfil programs, plus an intelligence background.

ED DEARBORN: Presently working for an airline as a C-130, DC-8 Captain, also Air Advisor for USCWF and the FDN. 13 years experience in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia as a chief pilot-director of operations under the guidance of the "company". Implemented the Congo operation and ran it successfully until the situation dictated the "company" pull him out.

I firmly believe this organization is needed to be sure that we get our program off the ground and the aircraft provided by the U.S. Council are used and maintained in an appropriate manner.

At present the USCWF has in it's inventory the following aircraft:

- 2 Helio Couriers
- 2 Bell UHIB's
- 1 Cessna 337 (02)
- 1 L19 Bird Dog

with negotiations in progress for a C-130. This is a sizeable investment and represents almost as many aircraft as are now in the FDN inventory. I am reluctant at this point to just turn over all this equipment without assurances that our aviators are completely trained in all phases of air operations. To do so would only defeat all the good work we have done to acquire good equipment for this operation.

I see this company as being self supporting and capable of generating revenue through maintenance contracts, pilot training, and possibly back-hauling of civilian cargo, (i.e. fresh fruit, flowers, etc.) in the C-130. This would give us the opportunity to implement the programs I have outlined. In addition, I believe a civilian company involved in this type of operation is far more plausible and also carries a small deniability factor where the U.S. government is concerned. It would certainly go down with the Congress and the public better as opposed to having a government agency involved. This was surely true with Continental Air Services in Laos and Vietnam. Air Services as you know, was not a proprietary; but a straight civilian company, working under contract and doing basically the same work as Air America.